

BENJAMIN MARCH, GUARDIAN OF RUTH MARCH.

MAY 11, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. GRAFF, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 2374.]

The Committee on Claims, having under consideration the bill (H. R. 2374) authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to issue a duplicate bond to Benjamin March, as guardian of Ruth March, an insane person, find the following facts from the sworn proofs in the case:

That Ruth March lives in Ashley, a small town in Massachusetts, and has resided there for many years; that she is 84 years of age and has become insane. She owned a United States registered bond, issued under the acts of July 14, 1870, and January 20, 1871, for the sum of \$1,000, and collected the interest on the said bond from time to time down to and including the interest due July 1, 1895.

Benjamin H. March, of Ashley, Mass., her nephew, was duly appointed guardian of said Ruth March on July 17, 1895. A thorough search through all her papers and effects has been made for said bond and it has not been found. It was shown that she shortly before burned some of her papers. It is not known whether or not said bond was then burned.

The affidavits by her neighbors and those with whom she came in contact rebut the presumption that the bond has been assigned, but tend to prove and prove, in the opinion of the committee, that said bond is lost or destroyed, although the evidence is circumstantial on that point. The woman is in such a condition mentally as not to be able to furnish any information on the subject.

The committee recommend that the bill be amended by striking out the words "equal to" in the thirteenth line of said bill, and inserting in lieu thereof the words "in double," and as thus amended the bill do pass.

The Comptroller of the Treasury, upon a hearing before that Department, recommended that no duplicate issue, for the reason that no one except Ruth March is known to have knowledge as to whether she assigned the bond when she was mentally competent to do so.